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# ONLINE news

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## Aid in Albania

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## NATO chokes Yugoslav lines

WASHINGTON — NATO forces are making significant military progress and systematically choking off the Yugoslav army and security forces in Kosovo by cutting their supply lines, according to Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen.

The bombing campaign is also starting to take its toll in decreased military mobility and eroding morale, he told a group of airmen during a visit to Barksdale Air Force Base, La., April 12. Reports of desertions from combat units in Kosovo and a

growing effort by young Yugoslavs to evade reserve call-ups are two important signs of sinking morale, he said.

In addition to military forces in the field, roads, bridges, command and control, air defense and some industry, including fuel, have been targeted and



Image by Master Sgt. Keith Reed

*Airman 1st Class LaResa Johnson, 31st Security Forces Squadron, Aviano Air Base, Italy, keeps an eye on the parking ramp for NATO aircraft flying strike missions in support of Operation Allied Force April 3.*

hit in the Kosovo area over the last few days, according to Department of Defense reports.

Secretary Cohen spoke as part of delegation headed by President Clinton, along with Acting Secretary

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## Memorial to rise in historic setting

by Staff Sgt. Michael Dorsey  
Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON — Its strikingly unfamiliar shape will barely graze the terrain of this landmark site in northern Virginia.

Along the northeast corner, four slightly larger-than-life human shapes emerge from the stone wall in the familiar pattern of an Air Force honor guard. Their features are vague and nondescript, allowing the viewer to

define race and gender of choice.

At the northwest end a path leads to the interior of the above-ground sculpture, revealing not so much an object, but an enclosure, open to the sky. The visitor's gaze is drawn upward to the sky above as the visitor is reminded of the free expanse of air and space that form the vast domain of the U.S. Air Force.

And in all of its proposed majestic

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## NEWSBYTES

### Kosovo donations

To aid Kosovo refugees, the U.S. Agency for International Development encourages people to donate money to "appropriate organizations." The agency does not recommend in-kind donations of clothing, food, medicines or other goods. The handling, storage and transport of these materials from the United States to the Balkans would be extremely complicated, time-consuming and expensive, according to USAID.

### Politics and Warriors: Women in the Military

The Public Broadcasting System broadcasts a "National Desk" series on government during April. One show, "Politics and Warriors: Women in the Military," airs April 16 on most PBS networks. However, check local PBS listings. Affiliates may run shows at alternate times.

### SNCOA teachers needed

The Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., needs professional military education instructors. For more information or to apply, call the academy at DSN 596-4134 or 596-4808.

### Beware the scam

From the 11<sup>th</sup> Wing Network Control Center, Bolling Air Force Base, D.C.: Do not press the phone keys 9-0-# for anyone. In a phone scam, callers make this request. Punching in those keys gives callers full access to your telephone line, which enables them to place long-distance calls billed to you.



## Letters to the editor

U.S. Air Force Online News publishes letters based on their appeal to an Air Force-wide audience each week. Send your letter to the U.S. Air Force Online News staff by completing the online form at

<http://www.af.mil/newspaper/>

Due to the number of letters, not all letters can be published. Letters may be edited for grammar and length. Only letters accompanied by a valid name and email address will be considered. Names may be withheld from publication by request.

## Civilian civil engineers valuable

... who thinks contracting out maintenance of base facilities is a good idea? As a career civil servant, I care about my job, my equipment and buildings, and my base. Contractors do not... Typically, after they "fix" things, civil engineer employees must follow up and finish the repair.

**Jack Ward**

*Vandenberg AFB, Calif.*

## Everyone on same team

(The) article concerning high stress jobs relating to the rescue mission tragedy hit home (ONLINE NEWS, March 17)... Many people leave the weather career field because of the horrible treatment they receive at the hands of the operational support squadron people and pilots... One of the best ways to boost the forecaster retention rates is to address the career field-wide morale problem by taking a hard look at a small, and overworked career field.

**Charles Smith**

*Sheppard AFB, Texas*

## Retention: an issue for everyone

Retention is a serious issue ... In the air traffic control business, we are hurting for help. Most controllers work six days and are off two with no light at the end of the tunnel. We send them TDY for at least 120 days with little notice... Now, I'm being told to expect a remote assignment in November... The problem is just getting someone in the right position to listen to your ideas rather than just shake their head and tell you they understand.

**Randy Williams**

*Travis AFB, Calif.*

## Proud of role in Air Force history

I'm proud to have served my country from 1941 to 1945. While spending three years overseas as a B-17 tail gunner, I was shot down on my last mission and held as a POW for two years. It was a thrill to see a recent air show at Homestead, Fla. I am proud of our Air Force today and the sacrifices the young men and women are making for this country.

**Elward H. Brotzman**

*Army Air Force, 1945*

# Delivering aid amid warfare in Albania

by Staff Sgt. Pachari Lutke  
*Air Force Print News*

As the Air Force tries to degrade and damage the Yugoslav military and security structure, it's working hard to save the lives of innocent victims of war. Amid the struggle, I saw firsthand how airmen reached out to help desperate Kosovar refugees in Albania.

It was Easter Sunday, and the lead element of Ramstein Air Base's 86<sup>th</sup> Contingency Response Group had been on the ground in Tirana since early morning. The 30 or so airmen stood by to unload more than 79,000 pounds of food and water from our C-17, the first U.S. plane to bring in relief supplies. Beyond the forklifts, U.N. trucks waited to transport supplies to distribution sites.

For accommodations, the Air Force set up a small group of four-man tents – four being a tight fit – looking much like camouflaged mushrooms some 200 yards from the flight line. We had no running water, no latrine facilities and no lights. Airmen drank bottled water and ate MREs. They used flashlights to navigate around the tent stakes on their way to the bushes: the bathroom facilities.

As temperatures dropped from the high 80s to where you could see your breath, I sat around on boxes, eating MREs by the light of my flashlight, talking to the airmen. They talked about missing a barbecue back home, joked that they never got to taste the steaks or spend Easter with their kids. Many of them had just returned from a deployment and were settling back into their "regular" lives when they were recalled. Soon, they were at Tirana to support Joint Task Force Shining Hope, delivering food and supplies to refugees fleeing Kosovo.

Yet, no one complained about where they were or what they were doing. Veterans of the field, they gave each other pointers on how to mix MREs to make strawberry pound cake.

At night, sleep came hard. Automatic weapons fire sounded in the distance; wild dogs fought in the fields; the command post phone rang at all hours. Tracers streaked across the sky, and we wondered if we would get hostile fire pay. We leaped to our feet at the sound of two large booms and looked toward the mountains. Bombs? Artillery shells? No, fighters had broken the sound barrier as they passed over our camp.



*Image by Staff Sgt. Pachari Lutke*

*Air Force Combat Camera Staff Sgt. Scott Reed helps a French serviceman carry a injured Albanian infant April 6 after being airlifted from Northern Albania.*

"The sound of freedom," one man remarked.

On my last day in Tirana, the camp grew by leaps and bounds as security forces and other support people arrived. Their numbers grew into the hundreds, but I had seen how 35 people made a difference at the dawn of Shining Hope.

**Editor's note:** Sergeant Lutke, an Air Force broadcaster, flew to Albania aboard the first C-17 delivering humanitarian relief for Operation Shining Hope.



# Air Force Memorial to rise in historic setting

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and national significance, retired Maj. Gen. Charles D. Link couldn't immediately digest the design's meaning and connection. After 40 years around aircraft, he tried to understand why the Air Force Memorial, which begins groundbreaking about this time next year, centers around a star.

Then it hit him.

"The people who designed it had to find a way to illustrate the idea of the Air Force with an abstract design much in the way the Washington Monument honors the father of our country," said General Link, president of the Air Force Memorial Foundation. "It's tall and straight and symmetrically balanced; it doesn't look like George Washington, but it brings to mind the values that George Washington represented for us."

"The genius of (memorial designer) Jim Freed was to find some emblem of the Air Force that he could then create the structure around. The star has been the central part of one Air Force insignia or another since the beginning of time. All our enlisted people wear it as part of our chevron."

For the first six years of his career, General Link wore chevrons as an aircraft mechanic before gaining a commission. He then served as an aircraft maintenance officer for four more years before earning his pilot wings, eventually retiring as a major general and special assistant to the

Air Force chief of staff.

Having seen the Air Force from both the officer and enlisted sides, from the operational and support perspectives, he believes the memorial reflects the Air Force's broad-ranging missions and membership.

"The memorial gives you a feeling of air and space — the limitless nature of the Air Force's challenge and achievements," General Link said. "In the interior I think visitors will be awestruck by this feeling of being suspended above the earth, somewhere between the surface of the earth and infinity and the scope of what can be seen and comprehended from this elevated position."

Nearly half of the \$30 million needed to build the 50-foot structure came largely from donations by the aerospace industry and individual contributions given through the Combined Federal Campaign.

General Link and other supporters are pleased with the progress, but building the memorial doesn't come without opposition. Those who object include the Friends of the Iwo Jima, a group of neighborhood residents, and some Marine veterans who believe that the Air Force Memorial will detract from the highly recognized Iwo Jima Memorial.

The two-year dispute began in 1997, more than two years after the National Park Service, Commission of

Fine Arts and the National Capital Planning Commission approved the site for the Air Force Memorial in May 1995. A court decision in favor of the Air Force Memorial is still under appeal.

"The fact is that the Air Force Memorial site simply does not interfere with the USMC Memorial in any way," General Link said. "The site has been approved through a very rigorous process set out in public law."

Of the 25 acres that make up Arlington Ridge, eight are devoted to the Marine Corps memorial, three for the Netherlands Carillon and two for the Air Force Memorial, which would complete the park, according to the National Park Service.

General Link said that some 30 potential sites had been carefully reviewed by the National Park Service and the Air Force Memorial Site and Design Committee. No other place, he said, compared favorably to the Arlington Ridge site in terms of solemnity, proximity to other commemorative themes, and connection to Air Force heritage. Arlington Ridge is near the site of the first military flight at Fort Myer, as well as the first military aviation casualty.

Though sited on lower terrain and almost two football fields distant from the Iwo Jima Memorial, the Air Force Memorial is expected to project just as powerful a presence for Air Force visitors in search of a memorial worthy of the heritage of the service and its predecessors.

"We are really a very different service," General Link said, explaining the memorial's design. "We are much more about an idea than we are about any particular material object. We have been about an airplane a very long time, but only because that was the only means to conquer the medium. Within our Air Force, there are only a handful of people who fly airplanes. Focus on an airplane, or on any particular object or person, could leave a significant part of our Air Force population behind."

More importantly, the general believes the memorial serves a stronger purpose by creating a personal appreciation in those visiting Americans who have no particular affiliation with the Air Force — all the more reason why he feels a memorial is necessary.

*This article is available in its entirety online.*

## General nominated for third star

WASHINGTON (AFPN) — Maj. Gen. Leslie F. Kenne, director of the Joint Strike Fighter Program in Arlington, Va., has been nominated for her third star and to become the new commander of the Electronic Systems Center at Hanscom Air Force Base, Mass. The White House made the announcement April 12.

Once confirmed, she will succeed Lt. Gen. Ronald T. Kadish who has been nominated for reappointment as a lieutenant general and will become director of the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization at the Pentagon.

Upon learning of her pending promotion, General Kenne said, "I am honored to have been nominated for a third star. I appreciate the confidence in my abilities as an officer that the president, secretary of defense, acting secretary of the Air Force and Air Force chief of staff have expressed. If confirmed by the Senate, I look forward to commanding the men and women of the Air Force Electronic Systems Center at Hanscom in my next assignment."

General Kenne will become the Air Force's first female lieutenant general following Senate confirmation.



General Kenne



## President plans combat zone tax relief

WASHINGTON — President Clinton announced his intention April 12 to issue an executive order designating the Kosovo area of operations as a “combat zone” for tax relief benefits.

The Kosovo area of operations encompasses the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Albania, the Adriatic Sea and the northern Ionian Sea. It also encompasses the airspace above these areas, thus covering the aircrews of long-range bombers and naval aircraft flying missions into the combat zone from outside the area.

This designation will provide several tax benefits to U.S. military people serving in the designated area, including the following:

- Their deadline for filing and paying taxes will be extended;
- Their military pay for months served in the combat zone will be exempt from income tax (subject to a dollar limit for commissioned officers), and will not be subject to income tax withholding; and
- Their toll telephone calls originating in the combat zone will be exempt from the telephone excise tax.



Image by Staff Sgt. Efrain Gonzalez

*U.S. Air Force aerial port specialists offload a C-17 Globemaster III at the Tirana, Albania, airport. The C-17 and other U.S. aircraft are currently involved in airlifting humanitarian aid to Albania in support of Operation Shining Hope.*

## NATO chokes Yugoslav lines

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of the Air Force Whit Peters, Gen. Henry H. Shelton, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Gen. Michael E. Ryan, Air Force chief of staff. They were at Barksdale to extend their support and appreciation, and meet with some of the airmen and families of those supporting the U.S. contingent of Allied Force.

“As we isolate and weaken the Serb forces in Kosovo, we are launching aggressive attacks against troops on the ground by hitting staging areas, headquarters and forces in the field,” the secretary said. “These attacks will accelerate as we continue to subdue Serb defenses and deploy additional aircraft, including the Apache helicopters, which are on the way.”

The United States now has about 500 aircraft assigned to air operations over Yugoslavia. In addition to the military mission, they are responding to the humanitarian crisis by transporting

more than 1 million rations and thousands of tents, sleeping bags and other supplies for the 1.56 million refugees.

President Clinton said American involvement in the conflict in Kosovo is about two things. The first, he said, was the human tragedy of hundreds of thousands of innocent people uprooted “not because of anything they did, but because they happen to be Albanian instead of Serbian; Muslim instead of Orthodox Christian.”

He said the second is a question of whether the United States and its European allies “are going to allow that kind of problem — hatred based on race or ethnicity or religion — to be the defining force of the next 20 or 30 years.”

The president also drew a large cheer from the airmen when he announced his intention to issue an executive order designating the Kosovo area of operations as a “combat zone” for tax relief benefits.

## U.S. Air Force ONLINE news

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